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ABSTRACT

To identify the determinants of satisfaction for managers, a Decremental Stepwise Multiple Regression analysis was run on the exempt employees in five companies. There were 27 predictor variables, each reflecting satisfaction with some specific aspect of work. The variable to be predicted was global satisfaction. It was expected that the determinants would vary from company to company because the company situations are different and the determinants would reflect the particular situations. The resulting individual company regression models did show differences even though these five companies were members of the same corporation. The results of this study do not explain why there are differences or what effects manipulation of the determinants would have; these questions require further study. The method, however, does describe the factors accounting for global satisfaction for particular companies. The method is generalizable and can be used as a followup measure of change resulting from experimental manipulations of the determinants. (Author)

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DETERMINANTS OF GLOBAL SATISFACTION: Organizational Differences

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in collaboration with

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University of Minnesota

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For a group of employees in an organization, global satisfaction is produced through a particular combination of factors. This combination of factors or, in other words, the determinants of satisfaction reflect a particular situation. The factors or determinants conceivably can vary from group to group within an organization; e.g., from clerical workers to managers. Furthermore, one would also expect to find interorganizational differences, whether for the total group or for a certain occupational group.

Satisfaction is complex and there is reason to expect that it may be more complex for managers, for example, than for production workers. In any case, satisfaction with a work situation is the result of various attitudes. Whether favorable attitudes exist toward the work situation depends upon the particular aspects of the job and also upon the way these aspects are perceived by the individual. An organization may have only

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indirect control over perceptions, but it usually has direct control over many aspects of work. It, therefore, can change these aspects of work through its policies and practices. This in turn can influence individual perceptions of satisfaction. In other words, organizational practices can determine what aspects produce global satisfaction.

What determines global satisfaction is important information for an organization, but particularly for the immediate superiors. Knowing the determinants provides the decision-makers with direction relative to what practices to continue or possibly to develop beyond current practices. The information might also be used when selecting new employees; i.e., for selecting people who would consider the determinants also as satisfiers. As an attempt to identify the determinants of satisfaction and to make interorganizational comparisons, an analysis of managerial satisfaction was done in five companies. A multiple stepwise regression analysis was conducted using satisfaction with specific work aspects as predictor variables and global satisfaction as the variable to be predicted.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

The sample consisted of 1148 managers (exempt employees) from five different companies, members of the same corporation. The companies were as follows:

Company A - real estate and construction organization, N = 80.

Company B - corporate staff (planning and direction function), N = 104.

Company C - discount sales organization, Sample N = 199.

Company D - retailing organization, Sample N = 226.

Company E - retailing organization, Sample N = 479.

The managers ranged in age from 19-65 years. The mean age was 39 and the median was 35. Educational backgrounds ranged from grade school or less to Ph.D. degree. The mean educational level was 2-3 years of college. For tenure, whether on the present job, with the company, or in the occupation, the experience ranged from less than one year to 47 years. The mean tenure on the present job was five years. For tenure with the company and tenure in the occupation, the mean was 11 and 13 years respectively. The average manager, therefore, was 39 years old, had been with the company for 11 years, in the occupation or same line of work for 13 years, on the present job for five years, and had 2-3 years of college.

DESCRIPTION OF VARIABLES

There were 27 predictor variables (the x's), each reflecting satisfaction with some specific aspect of work. The predicted variable (the y) was global satisfaction which consisted of satisfaction with everything. Each variable was measured by items in a Likert-type attitude scale format. The variables are listed below, with the last one being

the predicted variable.

1. Opportunities for Advancement
2. Ability Utilization
3. Satisfaction with Progress of Career
4. Satisfaction with Choice of Career
5. Regular Communications with Superiors
6. Openness of Formal Communication Channels
7. Company Aims and Plans
8. Company Policies and Practices
9. Amount of Compensation
10. Comparison of Compensation
11. Compensation Practices
12. Overall Cooperation
13. Absence of Discrimination
14. Feedback from Superiors
15. Individual Identity
16. Credibility of and Confidence in Management
17. Participation in Decision-Making
18. Clarity of Company Philosophy and Goals
19. Effectiveness of Performance Evaluation
20. Bases of Promotion
21. Promotion Practices
22. Recognition from Superiors

23. Job Security
24. Staffing of Organization
25. Technical Competence of Supervision
26. Human Relations of Supervisors
27. Work Challenge
28. Global Satisfaction

METHOD

The items for the predictor variables (scales) were formulated from information obtained in interviews with a representative sample of employees. The items were then grouped into four-item scales on the basis of content similarity. A five-point Likert scale, with verbal anchors ranging from Not Satisfied to Extremely Satisfied, was used for responses to the satisfaction-related items. Four items were employed in an attempt to get four basic measures of the same work aspect as well as to cover slightly different components of each underlying work aspect. The Hoyt[1] index of internal consistency for the scales ranged from .55 to .95. The median Hoyt value was .84

The questionnaire was administered in November, 1970. Most of the administration was done on site, in groups of from 20 to 60. Experienced research assistants from the Industrial Relations Department were used as administrators. A few out-of-state employees were surveyed by mail. The mail survey consisted of about 10% of the total sample.

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[1] C. J. Hoyt, "Note on a simplified method of computing test reliability," Education and Psychological Measurement, 1941, Vol. 1, pp. 93-5.

The survey was company-sponsored, but employee participation was voluntary. The respondents were assured of anonymity. The responses were recorded on separate answer sheets and names were not requested. The answer sheets were taken and retained by the Industrial Relations Center staff and only summary findings were reported to the individual companies. The data were punched on cards and analyzed using a Decremental Stepwise Multiple Regression program. In this program, variables are deleted one at a time, each time dropping the variable with the smallest raw score regression coefficient. Deletion of variables continue up to the point where each remaining coefficient was significant at the .01 level. A regression was run on the data for each of the companies separately and also for the total sample.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 gives an indication of the ranges and distributions of the predictor-predicted variable correlations and the predictor variable intercorrelations.

TABLE 1

	COMPANIES				
	A	B	C	D	E
(xy) Correlations					
Highest Correlation	.80	.84	.80	.75	.76
Lowest Correlation	.20	.25	.33	.28	.25
Median Correlation	.51	.52	.56	.57	.49
(xx) Intercorrelations					
Highest Correlation	.88	.93	.92	.89	.87
Lowest Correlation	.05	.04	.19	.12	.13
Median Correlation	.50	.41	.53	.47	.46

Table 2 summarizes the variables having significant common variance with global satisfaction for each of the groups of managers. As indicated previously, the variables that were retained and are listed in Table 2 are those with Beta weights large enough to be significant at the .01 level.

Prior to deleting predictor variables, the 27-variable multiple correlation coefficients ranged from .87 to .92. After the deletions, the coefficients ranged from .86 to .89. The R^2's prior to deletions ranged from .75 to .85 and after deletions, from .74 to .80.

TABLE 2

DETERMINANTS OF GLOBAL SATISFACTION

Predictor Variables (Scales)	COMPANIES A (N=80)	B (N=104)	C (N=199)	D (N=226)	E (N=479)	TOTAL GROUP (N=1148)
1) Opportunities for Advancement		.20[a]				
2) Ability Utilization			.26	.23	.28	.22
3) Satisfaction with Progress of Career	.46			.24	.20	.19
4) Satisfaction with Choice of Career		.30	.49	.23	.20	.24
6) Openness of Formal Communication Channels	.19					
7) Company Aims and Plans					.15	
11) Compensation Practices						.06
12) Overall Cooperation						.10
15) Individual Identity				.21		.09
18) Clarity of Company Philosophy and Goals					-.12	-.07
22) Recognition from Superiors			.24			
23) Job Security					.09	
25) Technical Competence of Supervision				.17		
27) Work Challenge	.44	.51			.22	.20
Initial-27-variable multiple correlation coefficients:	.91	.92	.88	.89	.87	.87
R^2:	.83	.85	.78	.79	.75	.76
Resultant multiple Correlation Coefficients:	.89	.89	.86	.88	.86	.87
R^2:	.79	.80	.74	.77	.74	.75

[a]Beta Weights or Standard Partial Regression Coefficients

The determinants of satisfaction for Company A are Satisfaction with Progress of Career (3), Openness of Formal Communication Channels (6), and Work Challenge (27). Variables three and six both have high common variance with global satisfaction. In Company B, satisfaction is determined by Opportunities for Advancement (1), Satisfaction with Choice of Career (4) and Work Challenge (27). Work Challenge in this company (Beta weight = .51) accounts for about half the global satisfaction variance. Ability Utilization (2), Satisfaction with Choice of Career (4), and Recognition from Superiors (22) are the determinants in Company C. The Beta weight for Satisfaction with Choice of Career is .49 in this company. In Company D, the Beta weights for the five determinants are relatively the same size; no one determinant is more important than the others. The determinants are: Ability Utilization (2), Satisfaction with Progress of Career (3), Satisfaction with Choice of Career (4), Individual Identity (15) and Technical Competence of Supervision (25). There are six positive determinants in Company E. Ability Utilization accounts for the greater amount of global satisfaction variance. Clarity of Company Philosophy and Goals, however, has a negative Beta weight indicating that it is functioning as a suppressor variable.[2]

Between organizations, there are differences in what determines global satisfaction, but there are also some similarities. In four of the five companies, for example, Satisfaction with Choice of Career is a determinant, but it is more important to Company C than to any other. For three companies Ability Utilization, Satisfaction with Career Progress and Work Challenge are

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[2] Jum C. Nunnally, Psychometric Theory, (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1967) p. 162.

important determinants. Ability Utilization has relatively equal importance in the three companies, but Satisfaction with Career Progress is a much greater determinant in Company A (.46) than in Companies D (.24) and E (.20). Work Challenge is high in importance in both Company A (.44) and B (.51) as compared with Company E (.22).

The remaining determinants, however, vary from company to company. For instance, in Company A, Openness of Formal Communication Channels contributes to global satisfaction. In Company B, having Opportunities for Advancement is important. Recognition from Superiors is unique to Company C while in Company D, Individual Identity and Technical Competence of Supervision are determiners of global satisfaction. Company Aims and Plans and Job Security are unique to Company E.

The multiple regression was also run on the total group data. It is necessary to point out, however, that these results are unweighted; that is, the groups with the larger number of managers will have greater influence on outcomes. As a result, variables which did not appear in the individual companies came out as determiners in the total group; e.g., Compensation Practices and Overall Cooperation. The determinants of global satisfaction for the total group are as follows (ranked by size of Beta weight):

	Beta weights
4) Satisfaction with Choice of Career	.24
2) Ability Utilization	.22
27) Work Challenge	.20

3)	Satisfaction with Progress of Career	.19
12)	Overall Cooperation	.10
15)	Individual Identity	.09
11)	Compensation Practices	.06
18)	Clarity of Company Philosophy and Goals	-.07

As in Company E, Clarity of Company Philosophy and Goals appears as a suppressor variable.

CONCLUSIONS

Determinants of global satisfaction for this group of 1148 managers were described. The determinants varied from company to company. There were some common determinants; they were Ability Utilization, Satisfaction with Progress of Career and with Choice of Career, and Work Challenge. But each company in this study had one or two determinants which did not appear in any other company. Thus, Openness of Formal Communication Channels was a determinant in Company A, Opportunities for Advancement in Company B, Recognition from Superiors for Company C, Individual Identity and Technical Competence of Supervision in Company D, and Company Aims and Plans and Job Security in Company E. The data, therefore, show that the determinants of global satisfaction vary from company to company even for the same type of employees and for companies within the same corporation.

Since the intent of this analysis was to describe what determines global satisfaction in particular organizations, the findings are not intended for

generalization to other organizations. However, the method employed in this study is generalizable. The method provides a way of ascertaining the determinants of global satisfaction for a whole company or for any group of employees. Used in several companies, the method enables one to make interorganizational comparisons.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE METHOD

Of primary importance is the capability of the stepwise regression procedure to reduce the number of elements in one's model to the lowest significant number. Often companies are overwhelmed with information from studies of job satisfaction. Reports to top management necessarily reflect the principal findings. The regression analysis aids in this identification.

The regression analysis also provides the researcher with some idea of the relative importance of each of the elements in determining overall job satisfaction. Because of the dependence between the elements in the equation, this interpretation should be considered more of a hypothesis. But without other evidence, it is probably the best estimate of what matters most when explaining global satisfaction.

The organizational interventionist will be pleased to know the results of the regression model. These results, coupled with some of the specific problems which are uncovered, can aid him in his assessment of the importance of the problems in the total picture. For example, the model for Company A shows that satisfaction with one's career progress, the degree of openness of the formal communication channels and the challenge of the

work combine to explain 79% of variance in global satisfaction. Satisfaction with compensation does not appear as an important element in this model, yet for this company it was found that 40% of the employees were dissatisfied with practices and policies of compensation. This might cause an interventionist to become overly concerned with this one area instead of considering the more important elements. The dissatisfaction with compensation, when coupled with the information from the regression analysis, helps the interventionist put the compensation problem in perspective.

Finally, this kind of analysis will begin to help us in our study of the underlying causes of global job satisfaction. One can take an element from the model and attempt to change those things in the organization which contribute to it. One can then observe the results of these changes on the element and on the element's importance in the model. One can begin to understand some of the causal relationships underlying global satisfaction. In line with this reasoning, follow-up studies are now in progress on the five companies discussed above.

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13. ABSTRACT

To identify the determinants of satisfaction for managers, a Decremental Stepwise Multiple Regression analysis was run on the exempt employees in five companies. There were 27 predictor variables, each reflecting satisfaction with some specific aspect of work. The variable to be predicted was global satisfaction. It was expected that the determinants would vary from company to company because the company situations are different and the determinants would reflect the particular situations. The resulting individual company regression models did show differences even though these five companies were members of the same corporation. The results of this study do not explain why there are differences or what effects manipulation of the determinants would have; these questions require further study. The method, however, does describe the factors accounting for global satisfaction for particular companies. The method is generalizable and can be used as a follow-up measure of change resulting from experimental manipulations of the determinants.

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